

## **Background**

- What was your position and role with the task force?
  - I was a volunteer on the task force, but we were not given formal titles. Most of my responsibilities were related to the sourcing team.
- How did you come to work on the task force?
  - Insight Partners
- What kind of projects did you work on?
  - Projects listed below
    - The vast majority of my time was spent sourcing: I worked to procure PPE from overseas by managing inbound leads. This primarily involved vetting for fraud, checking for FDA certifications, determining potential inventory / capacity available for purchase, organizing an in-person site visit and collecting data (e.g., DUNS number) for procurement. The items required for procurement frequently changed and were often unclear, so significant time was also spent trying to determine what was required (e.g., whether KN95s were acceptable for import). We were directed to only purchase PPE that we could confirm was not going to end up in the United States if we did not purchase the product. Within government, we primarily worked with Rachael Baitel and Brad Smith
    - If detail is needed on other secondary projects I can advise further
- What were your day-to-day tasks?
  - See above for more detail, but the majority of day-to-day tasks was sourcing PPE and trying to get my leads submitted for procurement.
- Do you have prior experience in procurement and distribution?
  - No I did not.
- Are you still with the task force? If not, why did you leave?
  - No I am not. I chose to leave so I could start self-quarantine and return to friends and family.

## **Can you tell us about the organizational structure of the task force?**

- Who did you work with? What were their roles?
  - The organizational structure was relatively opaque, but my best understanding is:
    - Overall task force led by Jared Kushner, Adam Boehler and Admiral Polowczyk. I am not sure how they divided responsibilities.

- Brad Smith reported into Adam Boehler and served as a day-to-day leader across work streams.
- Rachael Baitel reported into Brad Smith and led the sourcing team.
- The sourcing team consisted of ~8-12 volunteers. We worked very closely with Rachael Baitel and Brad Smith.
- Other teams included:
  - **Air Bridge / Logistics** – managed logistics for PPE shipments and included at least one volunteer. Reported into Brad Smith and possibly others.
  - **Distributor Management** – managed relationships with private sector medical distribution companies. Led by Dennis Robb. Brad Smith significantly involved.
  - **Expansion** – worked with domestic companies to increase PPE manufacturing capacity. Led by Michael Duffy. Brad Smith significantly involved.
  - **Preservation** – worked on ideas to reduce consumption of PPE. Led by McKinsey team.
  - **Modeling Teams** – At least two separate teams, consisting primarily of private sector volunteers.
  - **Data Teams** – Managed data requests to distributors. Led by James Liberko.
- How many volunteers were on the task force?
  - I am not sure of total number, but would guess 15-30. It is hard to get an exact number as I did not have visibility across teams, and it was not always clear whether someone was a volunteer or part of a paid team.
- What was their experience in procurement and distribution?
  - None of the volunteers working on the sourcing team had any significant experience in procurement or distribution. Every volunteer on the sourcing team came from a finance background and was under age 28.
- Who did you work for? Can you describe the chain of command and what projects those folks were responsible for?
  - See above. My understanding of the chain of command was:
    - Sourcing team > Rachael Baitel > Brad Smith > Adam Boehler > Jared Kushner > POTUS
- What was their experience in procurement and distribution?
  - Rachael Baitel did not have procurement experience
  - Brad Smith had healthcare experience and ran a medical services company. His company likely negotiated contracts and procured

materials, but I am not sure whether he was involved. Procurement was not his area of expertise.

- Did you work with Rachael Baitel, Brad Smith, or Jared Kushner?
  - Yes I worked daily with Rachael and Brad.
  - Jared Kushner came and visited the sourcing team and asked what we needed from the government to be more effective. He spoke for a few minutes but that was the full extent of our direct interaction.
- What kind of work did they do?
  - See above.

**Did you work with any third parties, like private procurement and distribution companies?**

- What companies? And, specifically who?
  - I worked with private medical distribution companies including Medline, McKesson, Cardinal Health, Henry Schein, Owens & Minor. Other volunteers also worked with logistics companies like UPS and FedEx
  - There were many other people from the distributors involved based on the number of people cc'd on emails regularly, but distributor relationships were handled primarily by Dennis Robb. Other volunteers likely had more exposure to specific other people based on their leads and day-to-day responsibilities.
- What were their roles?
  - I am not sure of the individual roles within their respective companies but they were typically SVPs.

**Can you tell us about the process for procuring and distributing PPE?**

- How were private companies selected to work with the task force?
  - I believe the decision to include specific companies was made by Dennis Robb or Brad Smith based on perceived market share. Brad Smith asked several volunteers to find “an objective rationale” to explain why some distributors were selected and others were not, weeks after the decision had been made. The rationale had to be designed such that the companies already selected would be included, and all other distributors would be excluded.
- For PPE purchased by private companies working with the task force, where there any controls on pricing or where the PPE was to be distributed?
  - For goods that were shipped by the air bridge, 50% of the materials had to be distributed to hot spots, but am not sure if that was in an actual contract or tracked by the government or the companies. I was not aware of any pricing controls.

- I am not aware of any controls for PPE that was not shipped by the air bridge.
- Did the government directly procure any PPE? If not, why not?
  - I was not aware of FEMA directly procuring any PPE while I was there. I know the government did procure some PPE for the national stockpile, but most of it was due in late 2020 or 2021. Numerous leads were sent to procurement, but they did not move forward as far as I know.
  - From my perspective, there were a number of different reasons FEMA did not procure PPE, including:
    - Leadership was concerned about “stepping on the toes” of the private markets and wanted to be “the buyer of last resort” – in a market like PPE where demand is greater than supply, the buyer of last resort will end up with nothing as there are plenty of willing buyers.
    - The government generally moved too slowly, particularly by insisting all vendors have a Sam.gov registration, which can take days or weeks to get, and by taking significant time to complete certain process checks, like signing an LOI. These delays often caused the US to lose to private buyers or other countries.
    - No one on the sourcing team had any procurement experience, which likely slowed down the process.
    - Our team was relatively small compared to the number of leads. There were hundreds if not thousands of leads, and only about 10 volunteers. This overloading made it more difficult to be responsive to every lead, slowing down response times and causing confusion.
    - The government required an on-site visit to move to procurement, but for a multi-week period had no way to schedule or complete these visits. From approximately March 31 until at least April 10, the government still required these visits but had no ability to complete them.
    - The government generally prioritized passing leads to private distributors rather than procuring directly.
    - There was a relatively high number of fraudulent offers in the market, which took time to vet and sort through.
- Were you told to prioritize leads from VIPs? Can you give us examples? Did those leads pan out?
  - Yes we were told to prioritize leads from senior officials and in certain cases from conservative journalists
    - Admiral P, Avi Berkowitz (Kushner’s Chief of Staff) and several representatives sent in leads that were prioritized and recorded on a VIP Leads spreadsheet.

- Charlie Kirk sent in several leads which were prioritized for responses
  - Jeanine Pirro demanded masks be sent to a particular hospital and I believe 100,000 masks were sent to the hospital in response. Rachael Baitel was involved in handling this request.
  - A lead on PPE from Tana Goertz the Trump Team Coordinator at "Women for Trump," was passed to a volunteer with the note "Please Prioritize this one." Rachael Baitel, Brad Smith, and Michael Duffey were on the email chain, and Derek Kan and Robert Kadlec were involved earlier in the process (based on forwarded emails)
  - Albert Hazzouri (a dentist and Trump golf buddy) also came in as a lead and was prioritized as Rachael Baitel managed the response directly
- Did you ever get leads for medical supplies – like ventilators – that you had trouble passing on? If so, can you explain why this was the case?
  - Yes we received many leads on medical supplies, including ventilators
  - Despite their criticality, the process for procuring ventilators shifted frequently and was generally not clear. Our volunteer team was originally instructed to pass on ventilator procurement opportunities to a FEMA employee reportedly dedicated to ventilators. After sending many of these leads to her by email, the FEMA employee told us she was not in charge of procuring ventilators and instructed us to send these leads to a web link. We clicked the link, but were not able to find any information aimed at someone with ventilators to sell on the website. We flagged this issue, but still were not given a clear answer for how to handle potential ventilator procurement opportunities. After numerous questions, the process for ventilators was no clearer and so chose to try to procure them directly given we did not have anyone else to point them to. We also forwarded these leads directly to states procurement offices, as we did not want to lose the opportunities entirely and remained unsure of who could purchase these vital healthcare systems at FEMA.
- Did any aspects of the process for procuring and distributing PPE strike you as inefficient, ineffective, or cause for concern? If so, we would like to hear more about that.
  - I can really only comment in detail on the procurement side (not distribution), but it was a hugely inefficient operation. No one on the sourcing team had any procurement experience and the processes were extremely opaque. This caused the process to be highly iterative and confusing, with many missteps and frequently duplicated work. After three weeks of working seven days per

week, the sourcing team had not directly procured a single item of PPE. I listed specific issues in response to the earlier question “Did the government directly procure any PPE? If not, why not?”

- **Were you asked to be involved in any modeling efforts by the task force? If so, can you tell us about that?**
  - **Supply modeling – Volunteers were requested to build a model projecting the available supply of PPE over time, by product.**
  - **Demand modeling – Brad Smith requested volunteers find or build a model that showed a low case of less than 100,000 deaths.**
- What was the President Trump’s “blame the states” strategy?
  - On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Brad Smith told a number of volunteers at a dinner that Trump had personally come up with the strategy to “blame the states” during his press conference that day. Brad said this was done to shift blame on lack of PPE procured away from the federal government.
- Are you aware of any instances where procurement or distribution of PPE was influenced by political factors?
  - As stated earlier, leads from conservative journalists and senior officials were prioritized.
  - A large shipment of PPE on its way to New York was halted so that volunteers could select low-income hospitals to receive the PPE. It is my understanding this was done for political optics.
  - A Russian military plane carrying donated PPE was prioritized despite the fact the US government had to pay for the fuel (a significant cost relative to the value of the PPE), the PPE had unclear value as it was largely old military masks, and the delivery required a Russian military aircraft landing in the US.
  - The sourcing team did not handle distribution within the US, so I am not aware of how political factors did or did not influence domestic allocation of PPE.

## **Records**

- Did you use your private email account to conduct business on behalf of the task force?
  - Yes, all volunteers used Gmail accounts.
- Were you told to preserve your records associated with work on behalf of the task force? If so, what was the instruction? If not, what were you told?
  - Initially we were not given guidance on preservation. However near the end of the project, we were advised to send all emails related to

our government work to FEMA. However, some volunteers had already permanently deleted some emails.